

# Irish Business and Management Research: Towards the Post *Irish Journal of Management* Era

Invited Contribution

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**Abstract:** This paper considers the future of management and organisation research in Ireland in the context of the final issue of the *Irish Journal of Management* after five decades of publication. The *Irish Journal of Management* has provided a platform for Irish-based scholarship and scholarship on business and management in the Irish context while also embracing international contributions. Its demise coincides with a shift within Irish business schools towards internationalisation and a focus on publication in higher impact outlets, driven in no small part by research funding reforms, the drive for international accreditation, and global academic league tables. While this has greatly enhanced the profile of Irish business schools internationally, it has also arguably reduced the emphasis on Ireland as a research context. This raises some concern in that it privileges universal, theory-driven contributions to the detriment of more contextual insights. In this paper, we call for renewed attention to Irish-specific phenomena, including indigenous firms, and multinational subsidiaries. In so doing, we align with calls for greater more responsible research that values both the local and global. We illustrate the importance of contextualised research before concluding by outlining considerations for Irish management scholarship in a post-Irish Journal of Management era.

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## INTRODUCTION

After five decades of publication, this issue marks the end of road for the *Irish Journal of Management* (Crowley-Henry, 2025; Heffernan, 2025). This provides an opportune time to reflect on the future of research on management and organisation in Ireland, including research on the context of business and management, on indigenous firms, Irish firms operating internationally, and foreign owned firms operating in Ireland. While the *Irish Journal of Management* grew to publish many papers by international authors and based on international data, Irish research and Irish based researchers remained core contributors to the journal. We argue for the continued importance of this research in a post *Irish Journal of Management* context, but we also acknowledge uncertainty on how to ensure this research context continues to be addressed in the context of wider changes within Irish business schools and universities.

One of the key trends which precipitated the demise of the *Irish Journal of Management* was the increasing drive for publication in higher ranked and higher impact peer reviewed journals (Collings et al., 2025; Kelliher et al., 2025). These journals are typically published by international (non-Irish) publishers with international editors and editorial boards. This trend can be traced in part to the transformation of the Irish research landscape in business and management since the turn of the current century. This change was precipitated by the *Higher Education Authority Programme for Research in Third Level Institutions (HEA PRTLI 1998)*<sup>1</sup> and increased investment in

1 The Higher Education Authority Programme for Research in Third Level Institutions was an Irish government programme, launched in 1998, that provided integrated financial support for research to strengthen national research capabilities.

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research through initially the Irish Research Council for the Humanities and Social Sciences (IRCHSS), then through the Irish Research Council and Science Foundation Ireland, and now Research Ireland, and the European Research Council (Collings et al, 2015; Forfás, 2009). As Roche and Kelly (2025) highlight, since the early 2000s, Irish business schools and their parent universities increasingly became subject to, and engaged with academic league tables, where research output is a key measurement criterion. This amplified the focus on publishing in higher ranked international outlets to boost profile and legitimacy and ultimately, be more attractive to international students and faculty. Irish business schools made this transition relatively successfully, performing strongly on several rankings, with Irish business schools regularly ranking highly in European and global league tables – at times ranking higher than their parent universities (Roche & Kelly, 2025). At the same time, publishing in more universally recognised higher impact journals also increased individual academic' profiles and facilitated career opportunities internationally, reinforcing the push for higher impact publications.

A key implication of the transition to these higher impact outlets was a change in emphasis in terms of research positioning and contribution of the research undertaken by Irish based scholars. Higher impact, international journals inevitably place a premium on theoretical contribution and generalisability with context typically very much secondary. Reflecting on these trends Shapiro, Von Glinow and Xiao (2007) highlight the bias in management scholarship towards research that is universal and context-free. This means that the impact of the national context is often downplayed, perhaps more so in the empirical context of smaller, less high-profile nations. The increasing international academic staff profile within Irish business schools, while exceptionally valuable in increasing the diversity and vibrancy of the higher education landscape, also arguably broadened the base of research in Ireland, resulting in a lessening focus on Ireland as a context.

In this paper, we argue for the continued importance of context, and call for Irish based scholars to continue to research and emphasise research on the Irish context, including studying indigenous firms, Irish firms operating internationally, foreign owned firms operating in Ireland, and the exploration of "Irishness" at macro, micro and meso levels. This call is in line with recent movements for responsible research, as outlined in the principles of responsible research, which emphasise the importance of business and management research that values both "global" and "local" knowledge development (<https://www.rrbm.network/>). In addition, there have been increased calls by international journal editors for a more nuanced and deeper focus on the role of context. For example, Cooke (2017) in human resource management; McLaren and Durepos (2019) and Gümüşay and Amis (2020) in management and organisation studies. More broadly, we echo Johns' (2006, 2024) concerns around the "context deficit in leadership research", and Stahl et al.'s (2023, p.1) call for the need to "move contextual thinking from the fringes to the centre of management theory and research".

We begin by considering the importance of context in business and management research and call for an increasing focus on context. We briefly introduce the high-level context of Ireland's late industrialisation, and policy of attraction of foreign direct investment (FDI) as a backdrop to showcasing the importance of contextualised research on multinational enterprises (MNEs), and specifically multinational subsidiaries, and the Irish social partnership model. We chose these as illustrations of the value of highly contextualised research which emphasises the value of research on Irish specific phenomena. We conclude with some reflections on the factors likely to influence Irish based research moving forward.

## THE VALUE OF CONTEXT IN BUSINESS AND MANAGEMENT RESEARCH

Context is defined as "as situational opportunities and constraints that affect the occurrence and meaning of organizational behavior as well as functional relationships between variables" (Johns, 2006, p. 386). Although one might assume that an understanding of context would be central to the exploration of business and management phenomenon, it has not traditionally received the consideration it deserves. Indeed, the decontextualisation of management research has been lamented by scholars for some time. Despite increased calls for a greater focus on context in research, ultimately the degree to which research is truly contextualised within business and management studies has been questioned. Stahl et al. (2023) offer a more positive perspective based on their review into multiple management research fields. Specifically, they conclude, based on their review of Academy of Management publications, that there is an increasing recognition of a contingent view of management phenomena; an increase in multilevel research design which allow for greater consideration of context; and an increasing recognition of the value of a polycontextual approach which integrates the interdependence of multiple contextual

dimensions. Overall, they indicate a trend towards phenomenon-based research which incorporates the richness of context in theorising.

While Johns' initial observations were more narrowly focused on leadership and organisational behaviour research, from our perspective the definition highlights the importance of situating research in the macro environment in which it is undertaken. In line with Stahl et al. (2023, p. 2), our focus is largely on context at the macro level, reflecting the consideration of factors including political, economic, institutional, cultural and global contextual issues, as well as major events. We however recognise that these elements of context can impact on outcomes at multiple levels from the individual to organisational and even national institutional levels.

A focus on context reflects a shift in emphasis in research from homogenisation to pluralism (Tsui, 2007). From an international perspective, the increased emphasis on context also represents a push against the hegemony of research conducted in North America and a focus on US firms and samples (cf. Morley et al., 2021). This emphasis has precipitated the emergence of a body of scholarship on indigenous research. Indigenous research can be defined as "scientific studies of local phenomena using local language, local subjects, and locally meaningful constructs, with the aim to build or test theories that can explain and predict the phenomena in their local social and cultural contexts" (Van der Ven, Meyer & Jing, 2018, p. 452). A key implication of this research is that through engaging with local people, as subjects, observers, or researchers, research will reflect a less universalist and biased understanding of the phenomena of interest than would otherwise be the case (Tsui, 2018). While indigenous research is not without its critics (see Van de Ven et al., 2018 for a discussion), it provides several novel and important insights that have enriched scholarship in management and organisation studies' research based on a range of different countries (Salmon, Charvez & Murphy, 2022; Van de Ven et al., 2018; Tsui, 2018).

Context sensitive research requires the clarification and isolation of the influences of multiple, qualitatively different contexts that are embedded within a national context (Stahl et al., 2023). It represents research from the inside (local), or an *emic* perspective, as opposed to an *etic* perspective, which emphasises an outside (global) perspective (Evered & Louis, 1981). However, a focus on context does not necessarily imply unique insights (Tsui, 2018) and such a focus should not solely prioritise differentiation, it may also highlight integration in our understanding of the phenomenon/a under investigation (Johns, 2017). We echo calls in our field's top journals to emphasise context focused research, and we urge editors and reviewers to pay heed, as they are the ultimate gatekeepers to this call being enacted.

## THE IRISH CONTEXT OF BUSINESS AND MANAGEMENT RESEARCH

Our particular focus is on the Irish context, and we argue for the importance of ongoing research which brings this context to the fore. We now briefly outline some characteristics of the Irish context which provide a critical backdrop for business and management research in Ireland and on Irish based firms.

While a thorough overview of Irish economic history is beyond the scope of the current article (see Barry, 2023; O'Grada, 1995), we point to two critical trends which significantly inform the nature of business and management practice in Ireland. Specifically, we focus on the late industrialisation of the Irish economy and subsequent policy focus on foreign direct investment (FDI), and secondly on the role of social partnership. We choose these issues as they are two factors which are identified as being critical to the Irish economic miracle leading up to, during, and post the Celtic Tiger period<sup>2</sup>. Indeed, the FDI sector was also critical to Ireland's relatively quick emergence from the economic crisis of the post 2008 crash, and despite some policy headwinds in terms of US policy, continues to contribute to economic prosperity through burgeoning corporation taxes at the time of writing (late 2025). They also provide an excellent backdrop to highlight two impactful streams of research evidence that have emerged from each context. While this research has application and impact beyond the Irish context and much of it speaks to broader theoretical conversations, it is clearly grounded in the Irish context.

As noted, a key distinguishing characteristic of the Irish business system is its relatively late industrialisation (Donnelly, 1999; O'Malley, 1992; 1985). This is traced *inter alia* to a historically high concentration on agriculture and to protectionist policies pursued post-independence in the 1920s. Ireland's late industrialisation has been argued to be different to that of earlier developing nations and has resulted in historical structural differences

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2 The Celtic Tiger signifies the phenomenal economic growth experienced in Ireland during the 1995-2007 period.

in industry compared to other more advanced economies (O'Malley, 1992, p. 31). This has, in turn, led to the development of distinctive structural factors within the Irish business environment (O'Malley, 1985). While the Irish economy was largely agricultural in nature prior to independence in 1922, Barry (2023) identifies three key phases of Irish economic development after independence and prior to European Economic Community (EEC) accession in 1973. The initial phase of what has been termed a *laissez-faire* approach pursued by the Cumann na nGaedheal<sup>3</sup> governments lasted approximately a decade (from 1923-1932). This was followed by a protectionist policy regime of successive Fianna Fáil governments from 1932 to the late 1950s.

A Sean Lemass led government subsequently adopted the broad principles of a plan devised by T.K. Whitaker<sup>4</sup>, which set the seeds for the internationalisation of the Irish economy and a policy of investment by invitation which was supported by accession to the EEC, now the European Union (EU), in 1973. This policy shift dramatically altered the trajectory of Irish industrial and economic policy and ultimately enabled the Celtic Tiger growth of the latter part of the 20<sup>th</sup> and early 21<sup>st</sup> centuries (Barry, 2007; Gunnigle & McGuire, 2001). One could argue that it was enabled by the relative lack of institutional baggage owing to the late industrialising of the Irish economy. EEC accession was undoubtedly momentous in giving Irish businesses unhindered access to a market of almost 450 million people, repositioning Ireland from a small, insignificant island to a key player within the global community. Just over a half century from accession, Ireland has become a more stable and stronger nation, one of the world's most internationalised economies, and fully entwined with the challenges that the European Project has been facing in more recent years. 2026 will also see Ireland assume the EU presidency once more.

By the year 2000, FDI per head of population in Ireland was twice the EU average (Barry, 2004). Levels of FDI into Ireland were equivalent to the totals attained by the 10-member Central and Eastern European bloc, averaging \$25 billion annually in 2002 and 2003 (McDonnell et al., 2007). While there have been ebbs and flows in the level and nature of investment, it has remained remarkably robust. IDA Ireland (Ireland's Industrial Development Authority) report supporting some 1800 foreign multinationals employing over 300,000 people operating in Ireland in 2024. This includes many of the world's leading technology, pharmaceutical, healthcare, and financial services firms which have substantive operations in Ireland, contributing considerably to the national economy. This employment represents 11% of total employment nationally (IDA Ireland, 2025).

We now turn to two examples of critical research streams that embrace and reinforce the importance of contextualised research in the Irish context.

## RESEARCHING THE MULTINATIONALS: TOWARDS A SUBSIDIARY PERSPECTIVE

Against the backdrop of sustained inward investment and a critical mass of FDI across sectors including ICT, pharmaceuticals, medical devices and financial services, we have seen a significant emphasis on research on MNEs and particularly MNE subsidiaries in Ireland. A particular benefit of the Irish context has been an openness to research in these subsidiaries combined with a critical mass of researchers working in the area nationally. This research stream began to gain momentum from the mid to late 1990s and continues to the current day. While a thorough review of the literature is beyond the scope of the current paper, we can point to several key themes in that literature.

A primary theme has focused on subsidiary strategic roles and the evolution of subsidiary operations. As Delany (1998, p. 240) notes, this research stream is particularly important as it contrasts with the traditional focus of MNE research which was dominated by "the perspective of head office: the subsidiary is expected to obey parent company wishes and not to have an agenda independent of that parent". Research on subsidiaries in Ireland has significantly challenged this perspective and provides considerable evidence on the potential for innovation, influence and mandate development by subsidiary actors. For example, in this journal, Sharkey-Scott and O'Brien (2011) reviewed the MNE literature at that time through a subsidiary strategic development lens and identified

3 Cumann na nGaedheal was a political party in the Irish Free State, which formed the government from 1923 to 1932.

4 T.K. Whitaker (1916-2017) is considered one of the most influential civil servants in the history of the Irish State, with his economic policies greatly influencing the development of modern Ireland. In 2009, the Irish Academy of Management instituted the Irish Academy of Management Whitaker Award, and its first recipient was Dr. T.K. Whitaker, after whom the award is now named.

several obstacles which historically reduced the scope of subsidiary management research to date. A key theme in this emerging literature has been how subsidiaries manage the tensions linked to balancing cooperation and competition (Tippmann et al., 2018) or positive and negative attention (Conroy & Collings, 2016) in relations with HQ. More recently, the strategic position of the subsidiary has been considered through the lens of the global value chain (Ryan et al., 2020).

Indeed, the theme of subsidiary actors has been a significant one on scholarship on MNEs in Ireland (Conroy et al., 2017; O'Brien et al., 2019; Tippmann et al., 2014). This reflects the success of the cadre of managers with experience in running MNE subsidiaries in Ireland which has developed since the 1970s, and particularly their effectiveness in developing the mandates of local subsidiaries and gaining senior roles with global responsibility (Conroy & Collings, 2025). This literature has brought the importance of micro-political strategies and the role of subsidiary actors to the fore in understanding subsidiary mandate development.

A further key theme in this literature has been on innovation and knowledge creation in subsidiaries. While there are some overlaps with the themes identified above, the focus is on the subsidiary's role in knowledge creation and dissemination. Research under this theme also emphasises the balance between leveraging knowledge from within the MNE network and innovation in the local context and how impacts on subsidiary role evolution (Ryan et al., 2018). The importance of boundary spanning, highlighting how through knowledge transformation, boundary spanning collaborators from across the MNE can construct novel opportunities for the generation of creative outcomes are also identified (Tippmann et al., 2017). A recent study has also considered how knowledge can be successfully transferred to prevent loss and provide for future knowledge recombination in the MNE in the context of subsidiary closures (Reilly et al., 2023).

There is ample other important research that we could consider under this theme, but in the context of the limitations of space, we conclude this section by reinforcing the importance of the Irish context in firstly enabling this research, but also in providing a rich canvas of complex and interrelated subsidiary operations which offer a basis for research on subsidiary operations. It is important to note that the role of FDI underpinning significant Irish economic success and stability is under some stress at the time of writing, with the ongoing geopolitical tensions including the Trump administration's focus on repatriating US manufacturing and introducing tariffs on critical sectors. As a small, open economy, Ireland will be more exposed to the effects of any global shocks. As such, international business research can learn much from focused studies on the impact of geopolitical upheaval on small, later developing economies, how local subsidiaries adapt to these external challenges, and how national policy evolves in responding to global changes. Without risking any complacency, Ireland has weathered storms such as the current one before and insights from previous recessionary periods can provide some insight into how to navigate potential future crises (see for example Gunnigle et al., 2013; Roche, O'Connell & Protheroe, 2017). We now turn toward the Irish model of social partnership as a second illustration of the value of contextualised research in the Irish context.

## THE IRISH EXPERIMENT IN SOCIAL PARTNERSHIP

A second illustrative theme which we highlight in the context of the value of an emic perspective, or contextualised research, from the Irish context is the Irish model of social partnership which was a central element of Irish economic policy from 1970 (earlier agreements from 1970 to 1980 were less comprehensive and unstable than later agreements (Hardiman, 1992)) until the economic crisis of 2009. The Irish social partnership model has been of significant interest to "the most distinguished international scholars of the age in the fields of industrial relations, politics and economics" (Roche, 2009, p. 184), and without the research of Irish researchers focused on its emergence and operation, we would lack a historical record of its emergence, contribution, the impacts on stakeholders, and ultimately its collapse.

The Irish model of social partnership involved tripartite agreements between employers, trade unions and government but also included a wide range of civil associations. As D'Art and Turner (2000) outlined in this journal, these agreements incorporated broader socio-economic goals, thus they went beyond a purely industrial relations focus. They were characterised by negotiated co-operation between government and employers in restricting union members to agreed pay norms. In return, unions and employers gained some influence over public policy in areas, such as employment, social welfare and taxation (Roche, 1994). It is worth noting that in line with the voluntarist tradition of the Irish industrial relations system, firms did have the autonomy to operate outside of

national agreements. This became apparent in the earlier national wage agreements during the 1970-1980s, where MNEs were argued to have added significantly to the problems of the Federated Union of Employers in securing their members' compliance with national pay norms (Hardiman, 1988). During the period of social partnership, voluntarism allowed many of these firms and the newer US MNEs discussed above to operate outside of the social partnership agreements. In these firms, pay increases for non-union employees were typically determined based on a combination of individual performance combined with benchmarked annual increases based on market trends. Unionised US MNEs also did not directly follow the terms of national pay accords. This allowed them some flexibility in negotiating pay increases, which could be linked to productivity agreements or performance. However, the pay accords did provide a baseline level of pay increases which these firms did consider in determining overall pay increase (Collings et al., 2018; Roche & Geary, 1996).

In acknowledging the necessarily selective nature of our review, we point to four key themes or lessons from the Irish model of social partnership. Firstly, social partnership is widely regarded as having contributed significantly to the Irish economic miracle during the Celtic Tiger period. Indeed, reflecting the fact that the two were so closely entwined, former Irish Finance Minister Ray MacSharry argued "social partnership could well be the crowning achievement of the Celtic Tiger economy" (MacSharry & White, 2000, p. 144). O'Donnell (2001) argued that the social partnership impacted on the Irish economy through three channels: wage bargaining, coherent and consistent macroeconomic policy, and changes in supply-side factors. In essence, social partnership enabled a period of an exceptional productivity-led cycle of economic growth during the 1990s, through wage moderation, high employment growth, and a core focus of economic policy on deepening economic openness (Teague & Donaghey, 2015).

However, while social partnership had a clear contribution to wider economic success, outcomes for the trade union movement were mixed at best. Undoubtedly, trade unions gained in terms of a greater influence on policy and increased trade union legitimacy in workplaces. However, it did not reverse the declines in unionisation and trade union density (D'Art & Turner, 2005; 2011). Indeed, despite expectations that partnership may have eased union recognition challenges, union recognition continued to be problematic, and employer opposition to unions was argued to have increased in scope and intensity (D'Art & Turner, 2011). It has been argued that this employer opposition to, and lack of progress on, union recognition was owing to the ability of non-union firms to operate effectively as 'free riders', in that they could enjoy the benefits of national partnership, while avoiding the compromises and concessions that were core to such agreements (D'Art & Turner, 2005).

Third, it is noteworthy that the national partnership model that dominated the Irish industrial landscape did not readily transfer to the organisational level where the evidence of local partnership arrangements was limited (Gunnigle, 1997). This led Roche (1998) to characterise the Irish model of partnership as truncated. There are several reasons for this failure to translate this model to the firm level. These include the impact of voluntarism in Irish industrial relations that allowed employers to implement a range of non-partnership options where accord was a critical factor (McDonagh & Dundon, 2010; Roche, 2007). The impact of the wide adoption of sophisticated forms of union-avoidance in US owned MNEs was also significant (Gunnigle et al., 2005).

Finally, we point to the ultimate demise of partnership in the context of the austerity pressures which emerged during the economic crisis, following the financial crash of 2008/2009. Amid the crisis, the social partners failed to agree a coordinated response in December 2009. While the trade union movement had accepted the requirement to save €13 billion in public finances, agreeing a path to achieve the cuts resulted in deadlock (McDonagh & Dundon, 2010). While the Public Service Agreement 2010–2014, known as "the Croke Park Agreement" offered a potential revival of social partnership, ultimately the model has failed to endure following the austerity period. McDonagh and Dundon (2010) argue that a key element of the failure of social partnership to endure was that it lacked the institutional underpinnings of regulated arrangements in other European and particularly Nordic countries. However, they also note that the political responses to the 2008/2009 crisis, particularly the austerity agenda in the context of banking bailouts would have been difficult for the union movement to support. The voluntarist traditions of the Irish industrial relations system which resulted in a truncated model of social partnership were also significant.

One of the implications of the ultimate demise of social partnership has been a renewed focus on firm-level bargaining amongst trade unions. Indeed, unions have been argued to have expressed little interest in returning to national-level centralised bargaining (Paolucci & Roche, 2024). The return to firm-level bargaining is more attractive to unions for several reasons. Firstly, it supports the revitalisation of unions by sustaining and expanding union membership at the workplace level. Second, local bargaining arrangements can produce more tangible benefits for workers, reinforcing the benefits of unionisation for members. Third, workplace arrangements provide unions with

greater influence over managerial decision-making at the firm level (Paolucci & Roche, 2024). Thus, it appears the potential for a return to social partnership in Ireland remains remote for now.

We are aware that this is a summary review of the emergence and decline of social partnership in Ireland, but it highlights its significant contribution to Irish economic growth. There were also valuable lessons concerning the limitations of partnership for trade union growth and the ultimate fragility of the model in the context of economic crisis. This research has attracted considerable interest from international scholars (Roche, 2009), and without this valuable work, the lack a historical record of its emergence, contribution, the impacts on stakeholders, and ultimately its collapse would be a significant gap.

We now turn to the future of Irish scholarship.

## TOWARD A FUTURE FOR IRISH BUSINESS AND MANAGEMENT SCHOLARSHIP

We hope we have made a strong case for the importance of Irish scholarship and contextualised research on the Irish context. Unfortunately, the demise of context rich journals such as the *Irish Journal of Management* reduces the potential outlets which may be open to more contextualised and less generalisable research. However, as should be clear from the summary review above, research by Irish scholars on Irish topics is increasingly published in high-ranking journals, which reflects the importance and quality of the research.

More broadly, the drive for publication in higher ranked and higher impact peer reviewed journals amongst Irish business schools, and the increasing international focus in research, all contributed to the decline of the *Irish Journal of Management*. These trends no doubt risk a reduced emphasis on the Irish context of research and research on business and management problems in Ireland. Consequently, this key challenge raises at least two questions; what are the implications of this shift in focus? What can be done to ensure a continued focus on the Irish context? It also offers an opportunity to reflect on the role of research within the academy in Ireland (including the Irish Academy of Management) and to whom it serves.

Firstly, we point to the importance of the enabling context of research. In considering pathways to research impact, Irish business schools need appropriate faculty, infrastructure, knowledge and expertise, and research funding to ensure continued high performance in research. While we have seen a significant growth in the number of academics based in Irish business schools and increased recognition of business and management research more generally, there are other potential barriers to achieving these research impact targets. The research funding landscape nationally has been challenging and outcomes disappointing for business and management related studies. This is evident through the relatively poor level of funding success for business and management research over the past decade in the Irish Research Council<sup>5</sup> schemes. Anecdotally, there is a perceived bias that business and management research will be funded by business. While there is of course opportunity for funding from business sources, it tends to prioritise a more applied focus and a lesser emphasis on basic research. In determining further funding priorities, funders need to consider the importance of the Irish context, particularly in the context of business and management research. A renewed interest and investment in business and management research would support and enable a continued focus on indigenous research in business and management.

Notwithstanding the arguments in this paper, we argue for a continued focus on traditional research outlets such as publications in the highest impact peer-reviewed journals. These outputs contribute to the continuing global legitimacy of Irish business schools and researchers and any changes in focus should be carefully balanced. They are also critical for the career development of individual academics. Indeed, a focus on Irish based research and publications in high impact journals are not mutually exclusive. In some regards the demise of the *Irish Journal of Management* is reflective of the increasing capacity and success of Irish academics in publishing their work in the highest impact outlets (Collings et al., 2025). Clearly, there are research topics and methodologies which are more easily positioned for international outlets (for example, MNE research, HRM research, research on scaling SMEs). Seeking to publish research in higher impact journals should remain a focus for scholars and business schools alike and is as an important signal for scholars in the context of the international labour market.

5 Research Ireland, founded on Aug. 1, 2024, is the new national competitive research and innovation funding agency, established through the amalgamation of activities and functions of the Irish Research Council and Science Foundation Ireland.

In highlighting the value of contextualisation, we also point to the potential value of contextualising research to support the application of and increase the relevance of this research for different stakeholders. This reflects a broader focus on impact and practical application of research to deliver impact beyond academic stakeholders. With some research, there may be greater likelihood of local impact through the integration of local actors in research design which may increase stakeholder buy-in and support from an early stage. This may offer a path for Irish business schools to make a distinctive impact and increase engagement across stakeholders including industry and other local actors. While not underestimating the importance of international impact, we equally recognise the value of embedding this research within their home environs. These are not binary either/or options but rather both can be achieved. However, currently they can often be in tension. One concern is that some business schools, in a drive to increase international impact, funding support for national conferences (such as the Irish Academy of Management Annual Conference) has been reduced, while incentivising attendance at a small number of international conferences. We argue this is a retrograde step. It not only reduces the opportunity to present highly contextualised research, but it also risks reducing early career researcher development. National conferences tend to have strong engagement from PhD students who often present their early research at these conferences. Indeed, many emerging Irish scholars including the authors of this paper published some of their earliest papers in the *Irish Journal of Management*, an avenue which is no longer available. Thus, the importance of supporting national conferences as a means of building future research capacity should not be underestimated. Perhaps, the future would be best served by enhanced collaboration amongst academic societies and business schools to enable both local and global research ecosystems to flourish.

To ensure Irish business and management scholarship remains relevant, we also encourage reflection on faculty promotion systems. While we realise that many university business schools do not have full autonomy for promotions, we nonetheless emphasise the importance of these considerations. Specifically, we point to the need for increased recognition for portfolio approaches of research outputs, and emphasising quality and impact beyond an overly narrow approach based solely on high impact peer review journal articles. In this regard, engagement with the principles of responsible research in business and management and responsible management education should be encouraged. We do not in any way underestimate the importance and value of high impact peer review outlets and they should form a part of most academic' career portfolios. They should however not be the only outcomes valued in business schools.

## CONCLUSIONS

Given the decision to end the publication of the *Irish Journal of Management*, we took the opportunity to reflect on the future of research on management and organisation in Ireland, including research on the context of business and management, on indigenous firms, Irish firms operating internationally, and foreign owned firms operating in Ireland. We argued for the importance of context in business and management research and highlighted research on MNEs operating in Ireland and social partnership in Ireland as excellent examples of contextualised research. We believe that context should form an important element of business and management research moving forward and provide some reflections on the future of business and management research in Ireland.

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